

Testimony in Support of SB 383

March 7, 2016

Good afternoon Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann and members of the Education Committee. My name is Kris Lorch and I am here today on behalf of the Connecticut Association of Smaller Manufacturers (CASM). CASM is comprised of the Smaller Manufacturer's Association of Waterbury (SMA), the New Haven Manufacturer's Association (NHMA), Manufacturer's Education and Training Alliance (METAL) of Bridgeport and the New England Spring & Metalstamping Association and collectively represents over 400 companies with more than ten percent of the employees in the state's manufacturing sector. I am the co-chair of the NHMA Workforce Enhancement Committee and a manufacturer in Bridgeport, CT, since 1958.

CASM agrees with SB383 an act concerning the CT Technical High School system.

The Connecticut Technical High Schools are a valuable resource to the state and to the many manufacturers like me who count on these superior student graduates to become part of our workforce. Our concern is the current method for hiring teachers for the CTHS is inadequate to supply timely staff and therefore our future workforce may not be getting the education they deserve. If they are being taught by a substitute teacher who may not have the necessary knowledge in the trade because the current system is woefully slow to fill the necessary teaching positions. There have been occasions where the CTHS have lost good teachers because while the candidates were waiting they were offered and accepted other position in industry.

CASM members support wholeheartedly the provision to establish a pilot program to train incumbent workers in the Technical High Schools in an effort to have a workforce ready for the future of manufacturing and keep Connecticut in the forefront for manufacturers, to bring new businesses to our state because we can provide well informed and educated employees. CASM believes that we have one of the best manufacturing training systems in America and was recently ranked #4 in the nation in teaching metal working skills.

Thank you for allowing me to speak with you regarding this bill and please know that CASM supports passage and urges you to pass Raised Bill 383.

